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RHYMES
OF
YANKEE LAND.

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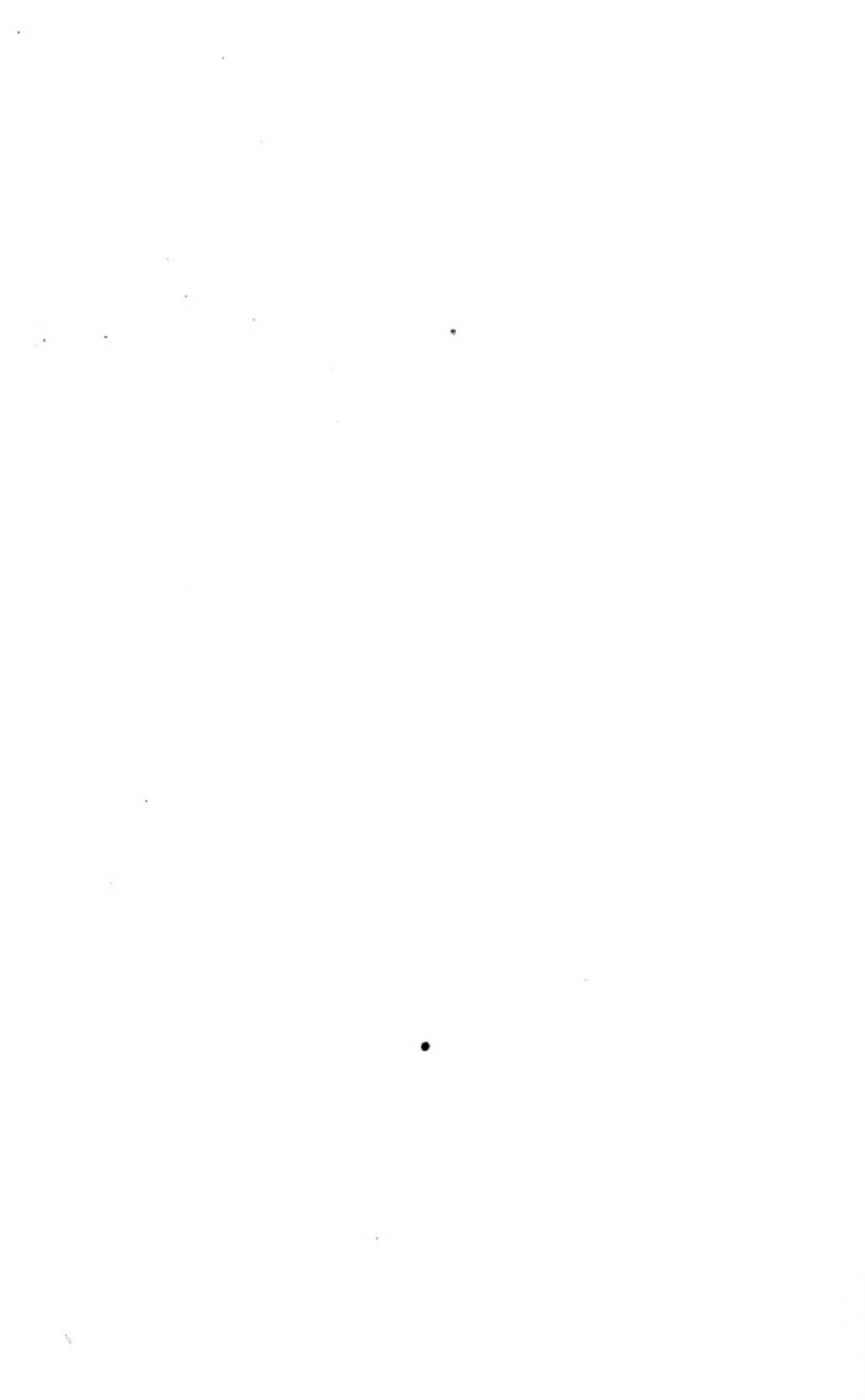
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1875

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA.



R H Y M E S

OF

YANKEE LAND.

BY

A E L L A G R E E N E.

FIFTH EDITON.

BOSTON:
LEE & SHEPARD, PUBLISHERS.

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TO

MY NEW ENGLAND FRIENDS,

AT HOME AND WESTWARD,

I Dedicate

THESE

"RHYMES OF YANKEE LAND."

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THE
SMITHVILLE WORTHIES.

SQUIRE SMITH.

OLD Mister Smith of Smithville died
Two weeks ago to-day;
We always thought the person lied
Who said he'd pass away.

With buoyant step, and fragrant breath,
And face with health aglow,
He seemed no older near his death
Than twenty years ago.

But gone he has, at last, from earth,
As every mortal must,
Of noble or of lowly birth,
Unrighteous they, or just.

Though it may seem as useless quite,
To weep and make ado,
Still, I have thought it well to write
Of him a rhyme or two.

Possessing not a noted name,
Nor piles of treasure high,
He yet enjoyed of pelf and fame
A moderate supply.

For comely speech, and good intent,
And for his neat attire,
The villagers with one consent,
Regarded him as “Square.”

Attending church on Sabbath days,
As everybody should,

He joined in all the prayer and praise,
As pious people would.

Within the week he walked down town,
On pleasant afternoons,
Wearing a modest suit of brown,
And humming quiet tunes.

He kept his temper all the while,
In weather dry or wet ;
And had a penny, or a smile,
For every child he met.

Of joy his heart the source and spring,
To him no dark nor wrong ;
He seemed from bitterest grief to bring
The melody of song.

At inns he never lingered much,
For beer and greater grog ;
When coming home from clubs and such,
Was never in a fog.

The Squire no stated calling had,
A “jack at every trade ;”
At neither one was reckoned bad,
But quite a figure made.

Three years a farmer’s life he led ;
There seemed to him a charm,
To gain his raiment and his bread,
By managing a farm.

For several years he kept a school,
In an adjoining place ;

Maintaining there a pleasant rule,
With dignity and grace.

He also wrote a little book
About his native town,
That had a literary look,—
Done up in covers brown.

To Washington he never went,
As statesman had no forte ;
Yet twice had been as juror sent,
And once to General Court !

He did not take to allopaths,
As would some other men,
But patronized cold water baths,
And sometimes took cayenne.

He spurned a miser as a thief,
And acted, "on the square;"
Though not a Mason, my belief
Is Smith had once been there.

He kept his courage always up,
And kept his record clear;
Kept only water in his cup,
And kept his wife so dear.

He kept of Sabbaths fifty-two;
Kept everything of worth;
Kept more than most of people do,
And always kept "the Fourth."

He kept his course with ease and grit;
Kept all he thought or heard,

That was for keeping really fit;
And always kept his word.

Smith led a quiet, even life,
And died when near fourscore,
Leaving to mourn him his good wife,
And grown up children four.

And on that saddest funeral day,
There gathered at his bier,
A thousand friends, as true and tried,
As ever shed a tear.

Within the churchyard, 'neath a yew,
They made his grave with care;
And lingeringly they bade adieu,
With sorrow, and with prayer.

Ye better bards, to whom belong
High themes and lofty verse,
Still deem as not unworthy song,
The life these lines rehearse.

Although a humble man was he,
Our Smith was still a man ;
As good on earth we seldom see,
And better, never can.

DOCTOR BLISS.

THE people were so seldom sick

That it was very true,

The one physician in the town

Had not enough to do.

This doctor was a gentleman,

Of average grace and wit,

Who studied just six years, until

For practice fully fit.

Then took his “sheep-skin” and his leave,

And unto Smithville went,

There hung his shingle out, and lived

Until his days were spent.

Although an allopath, he felt
Not very much inclined,
To be at odds with those who had
A different course in mind.

Indulging patients in their whims,
He seldom would refuse
Such mild "botanics" as their friends
Might deem it best to use.

He was so kind, this Doctor Bliss,
To press him there to stay,
The townsmen all agreed by vote,
A salary to pay.

That potent medicine, a smile,
He carried everywhere,

To cheer the sick, and drive away
That worst of curses, care.

A wit declared, and it was true,
When sickness was about,
The doctor, walking through the town,
Could *look the sickness out.*

There is a legend wide extant,
Once Death came walking by,
The doctor challenged him to fight
And made the monster fly.

But Bliss, devoted to the art
Of making people well,
To sickness and to medicine,
At last, a victim fell.

He loved the Squire, and looked like him,
Clad trim in brown attire ;
Near him he lived, and now at death,
Is buried near the Squire.

THE VILLAGE SCHOOL-MASTER.

A WORTHY gentleman in town,
Respected and revered,

Was William Wilson, learned and wise,
A teacher born and reared.

He was a very proper man,
Yet cheerful as was meet;
None were more knowing in the place,
Nor any so discreet.

The little school-house where he taught
For twenty years and more,
Had but three windows on a side,
And one above the door.

It cost six hundred dollars, just,
As records do appear;
And yet the scholars came to think
The place was very dear.

It stood upon the village green,
Hard by the “center church;”
Was well supplied with furniture,
But unsupplied with birch.

This Wilson had a better way
To punish recreant boys,
Who had been lazy at their books,
Or making needless noise.

Within a very “dreadful book,”
Where every crime had grade;

For every wrong a scholar did,
So many checks were made.

These famous checks had come to be
Regarded with such dread,
Some of the culprits thought it were
Far better to be dead.

With patience and with kindly care,
He led his pupils through
The path of common learning, till
They every feature knew.

And oft, perchance, they caught a glimpse
Of classic grove and field,
And felt a longing for the fruits
Those pleasant regions yield;

But Euclid and “the languages,”
In district schools of yore,
Were all discarded and forbid,
As very useless lore.

Since Wilson gave up teaching school,
Ten years and five have passed ;
But through a century to come
His influence shall last.

He still resides within the town ;
And though threescore and ten,
The people all declare he is
The comeliest of men.

CRISPIN CRANE.

In praise of one whose worth and wit
The Smithville people prize ;
Who, by a timely repartee,
Found favor in their eyes :

Disciple of St. Crispin he,
And christened Crispin Crane,
He mended boots and shoes for folks,
To get his bread and gain.

A kind, a brave, a little man,
But five feet tall when up,
He booted well each man that came,
And then would ask to sup.

His dwelling was adjacent to
His little shop, you see;
So, often, did his customers
“Drop in” to take some tea.

He took their measure in the shop;
When guests, they came to find
He fully had the power to take
The measure of their mind.

Full often, in the village store,
A brainless, brassy brag,
Did all the village people bore,
Defeating wise and wag.

The townsmen said, “If any man
Will squelch that dolt and fool,

We'll send him to the capitol,
Or fee his son at school."

One eve he boasted loud how great
His understanding was ;
" Let him among you show such mind,
A greater mind who has ! "

Said Crane—and pointed to his feet—
" Your 'standings large ! forsooth ;
None may gainsay the fact, for I
The measure took of both."

Annihilation is no name
For how that fellow felt ;
He hasted out and little boys
With pebbles him did pelt.

The morrow was town-meeting day,
And ere the time was spent,
They voted all that Crane should be
To legislature sent.

He proved so wise a little man,
So jolly with his friends,
So loth to speak, and always, then,
To bring about good ends,

So keen, and quick, and powerful, too,
A boasting man to floor ;
Some of the members of the House,
I think about a score,

Drew up a paper in due form,
And set to it their “fist,”

Of which, if records are correct,

The following is the gist:

“Good Mister Smith, respected Squire,

And friend of Crispin Crane ;

We wish, at your election, you

Would send him here again.”

He went again, and still once more,

Until six times in all ;

Nor by the lures of lobby men

Did he from honor fall.

'Twas in his time of public life

A party rose and fell,

Whose bad disaster at their schemes

'Tis pleasurable to tell.

Late in the term a question rose
This party called the test;
For which their leader spoke at length,
With artificial zest;

And wound his closing period up
To show "How blessed the land,
When 'garjuns' of the public peace
Labor reformers stand!"

"Labor reformers!" Crispin quoth,
"That means too proud to work!
And rightly named, for well you like
Life's burdens all to shirk.

"You're all adventurers and shams,
Unknown to honest toil,

Full frequent at the village inns,
And in the cheaper broils.

“Below the wrath of common men,
Too cheap for ours by half,
We'll not oppose your plannings, but
Explode them with a laugh!”

The wit that beamed in Crispin's eyes
Put all in merry mood,
As rang around the galleries
One soul-refreshing “Good!”

The gavel man forgot to rap,
Reporters dropped their notes,
Some member moved “the question!” and—
The measure had twelve votes!

And that's the way the party died
By this sarcastic Crane;
And hence the reason he was sent
To General Court again.

And since he finished there for all,
And closed his public life,
He's just as busy in his shop
And pleasant to his wife.

When once as petit juror drawn,
Crane went to county court,
To find how much the panel work
Was his delight and forte.

The court was held in meager hall,
Quite hot on summer days,

And in its age so trembling weak
'Twas fastened up by stays.

The judge who ruled that county court
Had good judicial grace;
He spoke melodiously, but wore
A stern, though sunny, face.

Serenely beamed through glasses bright,
The long-tried county clerk;
Who able seemed for many years
To swear men into work.

Across the court room from his chair
Crane saw, in buff and blue,
The sheriff sit in dignity,
A pleasant man to view.

To try a foolish case about
The matter of a "V,"
It cost a hundred dollars, just,
Besides the lawyers' fee.

The "great case" of the term was next
Before Crane's panel brought,
In which a citizen his claims
Of railway people sought.

The wooden witnesses were turned
By crafty lawyers round,
And made to swear that light was dark,
And broken cars were sound.

The lawyers, next, their arguments
Unto his honor spoke;

And in their speech most fearfully
The ninth commandment broke.

The proper judge, polite and prompt,
The jurors charged full clear ;
And they a verdict gave, unbought
By favor, love, or fear.

It didn't suit defendants much ;
To make a greater stench,
They vowed to carry up the case
Unto the fuller bench.

One afternoon there came a lull
In business of the court,
As lazy lawyers couldn't get
Their clients to report.

The judge evinced a wish to quit,
And bade to end the assize ;
“ For when there is no work to do,
This court had better rise.”

The crier closed the court, and said,
“ God save the Commonwealth ! ”
Opposing lawyers parted friends,
And wished each other health.

Crane’s panel parted on the steps
Of that low, dingy hall,
With little hope it would give way
To comely building tall.

The public men who had in charge
The matter of a site,

Had passed their time in foolish fuss
That grew into a fight.

That dingy court-house stands there still !
A relic of the past ;
Wherein the lawyers show their wit,
And argue questions vast.

MR. JONES, THE SMITH.

A STALWART, strong and cheerful man.
Our village Vulcan, Jones,
Was no exception to the rule
That smiths are seldom drones.
From morning stars till evening dews
His swinging hammer rang,
In keeping with the words and tunes
Of ballads which he sang.

Around his shop tall maples grew
And robins caroled there,
And rose and daffodil exhaled
Their sweetness on the air.

The gladdest man in town, he saw
More sadness than the rest,
But found his joy in frequent work
To have the saddened blest.

The humbler people of the place
Esteemed him very dear ;
And men of higher rank than Jones
Have sought his shop for cheer.
Did any speak of loss, he showed
The faith which never tires ;
Or tell of luck, his face would glow
As ruddy as his fires.

And men who shine as millionaires
And rulers in the land,

Are glad to say, that, years ago,
He gave a helping hand,
And spoke the words of cheer that gave
Them courage for the fight,
And patience, as they watched through dark
The coming of the light.

He seeks no higher station than
His anvil and his home;
But neighbors think he'll have high place
In that good world to come.
His life, throughout, an argument
How grand the humble man,
In meekness who performeth all
The noble deeds he can.

ABIJAH BEERS.

THOUGH Smithville was so blest of heaven,
To it one tedious thorn was given.

The place had one perfected sinner,
Most surely who had been the winner,
Did he and Satan run a race
On any course away from grace.

Supremely mean in all his deeds ;
His heart as hard as flint ; the needs
Caused by his extortions moved him not,
The pining poor were all forgot ;
Selfish, thick, marble-faced and stern,
Full quick to sin, and apt to learn
The ways of avarice and wrong ;

On primal sin improving long,
He chose oppression for his art,
And practiced it with all his heart ;
His sinning cloaked with graciousness,
And cursed when he appeared to bless.
He so gifted in causing tears
Had fitting name, Abijah Beers.
May gods protect if here, again,
So bad a man 'mong living men ;
And there was not, since earth began,
So much of meanness in a man.
The liberals declared for hell,
Else where could that sinner dwell.
He died at last as fools do die ;
Thistles thrive where his ashes lie !

LIGHT FROM DARK.

INTO THE SUNSHINE.

COME to the sunshine bringing bloom,

For the rose there's always room ;

Come to the sunshine bringing bloom.

Out from darkness and from night

Into the beams of morning light,

Out from darkness and from night.

Into the sunshine for relief,

Bring the troubled sons of grief;

Into the sunshine for relief.

Into the sunshine with a song,

Grasp their hand and lead them strong

Into the sunshine with a song.

Bring to the sunshine of your trust;
If they succeed, you surely must
Bestow the sunshine of your trust.

Full and free, to all impart
The sunshine of a generous heart;
Full and free to all impart.

Live in the sunshine while you live,
And unto all your sunshine give;
Live in the sunshine while you live.

Into the sunshine when you die,
Into the sunshine up to the sky;
Into the sunshine when you die.

REST IN WORK.

O H, tell me some secluded place,
Where, weary with this fitful race,
These tired limbs awhile may rest,
These tired eyes with sleep be blest,
This aching heart be freed from cares,
From disappointments and despairs,
And breathe there o'er my soul a calm,
Amid the fragrance and the balm.

Yet, if it be not wise to rest ;
If calls the race for speed and zest,
Or shine the fields with harvest white
That must be garnered ere the night,

My feet shall run, my hands shall toil,
No sighs for rest my purpose foil
To do the work and do it well.
No friends so fair or foes so fell
Shall win or fright me from the task,
Nor lessening of the work I'll ask.

I'll bear a manly part in life,
Nor fret or falter in the strife ;
And, spirit crushed or heart depressed,
Yet full of hope, alive with zest,
Protract youth's joys far into age,
Walk royally on pilgrimage ;
Be meek, but not a dolt nor slave ;
Patient in dole, in danger brave ;
'Till, blossomed white with grief or joy,
I take my bliss without alloy.

But tell me some sweet resting-place,
That I may better run the race ;
A respite give awhile from pain,
That I the grief may bear again.
Yet if this boon be still denied,
Oh ! Thou to whom none fruitless cried,
Grant me at least one sweet relief ;
Since there are ever sons of grief,
Grant me to help them bear the load
And teach to tread the paths I trod ;
In sympathy with those who weep
A respite from my sorrows reap.

“ YEA, WELCOME GRIEF.”

YEA, welcome grief in every form,—

 Of biting blast or whelming storm ;

The streams that would an ocean fill,

Or slow, continuous, wearing rill ;

Or trouble's flail, or sorrow's mill ;

A thorny path up rocky hill,

Or desert sands to scorch the feet,

Where torrid suns in fervor beat ;

Or barren, drear, and sunless plains ,

Where gloomy winter monarch reigns .

Up rocky hills sweet arbors are ,

And not a flaming sword to bar ;

And shineth still, though still afar,
Hope's blessed, bright, benignant star.
Hot deserts their oases have ;
And, crossed, the pleasantplash of wave,
And sound of brooks, and warbling grove,
Shall lift the pilgrim's heart above.

The true man says, though die I must,
Till death I'll keep a beaming trust,
Though every plan should fall in dust,
And choicest treasures yield to rust.
Night brings the day, grief bringeth bliss ;
And never that but cometh this.
Peace follows war, thorns speak the rose ;
Fatigue foreruns a sweet repose ;
And he who toils, nor seeks for rest,
With respite from his work is blest.

Or this the doctrine of true saints,
That he who hath but patient plaints,
And interludes his woe with songs,
To royal race and home belongs ;
And, crowned, shall come in little time
To thrones, and feast, and heavenly chime ;
And gain within this earthly clime,
A joy above all harp and rhyme !

“HOW BLESSED AND TRUE THE BELIEF.”

HOW blessed and true the belief,
That the joy which comes after grief
Is sweeter, and never so brief
As other joys.

How grandly inspiring the thought,
That the bliss by bitterness bought,
Is nearer to heaven than aught
On earth beside.

How sweet after storm is the sun,
And rest after labor is done,—
The peace that by battling is won,
And wealth, by toil.

If discouraged and distressed,
With sorrow and with care oppressed,
And sins confessed and unconfessed,
And every ill,

The heart were struggling for relief,
And found no succor from its grief,
In buoyant trust and bright belief—
How sad the earth.

But rules converse of these obtain,
Nor mortal suffered yet in vain,
A trivial nor the largest pain,
Nor ever will.

So let the troubled take good heart,
Learn well of suffering the art,

Nor shun to share a generous part
In life's good griefs.

Right where unkindest luck o'ertakes,
Our happy planning rudely breaks,
Of choicest treasures havoc makes,
We shall succeed.

We shall succeed, for God ordains,
Whoever suffers loss or pains,
Shall reap therefor abundant gains,
The interest due.

Of none the Father has such care,
As those who have abundant share
Of losses and of griefs to bear,
And foes to meet.

“THE SUGAR CAMP IN EARLY SPRING.”

THE sugar camp, in early spring,
Was fragrant 'neath the hill;

Where liquid sweet, from maple trees,
Did pleasantly distill.

Beneath the slab-roofed shed the fires,
O'er which the kettles hung,
And when the syrup “grained” in time
The cranes were outward swung.

Then “dips” of waxen sugar, John,
You offered to the girls;
Two smiling dears of sweet sixteen,
With innocence and curls.

One was a sister, good and true,
The other choicer friend,
Whom afterwards you vowed to love,
Till earthly days should end.

And now the kerchief that she hemmed
Is moist with tears you shed,
To think that ere the wedding day
Your bonnie Jane was dead.

And so you sigh, and so you learn
It is how sadly true,
Our choicest good and dearest friend
Do quickly fade from view.

But every day you live to mourn
You seem so much a man,

I am inclined to think the loss
Is other than a ban.

And yet 'tis tender business this,
To rightly touch the heart,
Which even long ago was called
From troth or kin to part.

MISCELLANEOUS.

MY COMRADE'S GRAVE.

A CHRISTIAN, comrade, son, and friend *
Is slumbering 'neath this sod;
His form is there, his name with us,
His spirit with his God.

Fit place it is for hero's grave,
Where mountain zephyrs play;
Where fair ones bring the choicest flowers,
And good men pause to pray.

To designate his sepulcher,
We raise this shaft, but trust
His deeds shall live when monuments
Are crumbled into dust.

* John J. Bisbee, of Worthington.

A TRIBUTE.

KIND, Christian lady, faithful friend,
Accept each humble line,
Inscribed, in heartfelt praise, to worth
And noble deeds like thine.

How wise thy words, and fitly said ;
They guide, encourage, cheer ;
Dispel the darkness of defeat,
With hope displacing fear.

Some kindnesses are burdensome,
In fact, designed as debts ;
Not thine, these favors, which, increased,
But multiply regrets.

Like showers thy benedictions come,
Refreshing as the dew ;
Delightful as the morning sun,
Or as the upper blue.

Ah ! gentle friend, how bright the earth
In every clime would be,
Did all admire and practice, too,
Unselfishness like thee.

THE SWEETHEART.

SO bold, should one of you accuse
That some sweet girl inspires my muse,
To all the rest it would be news,
But not to me.

She never tells the blessed fact,
By any word or any act,
Evincing such consummate tact,
To keep it hid

She is not reckoned on the list,
Of those who try to "keep it whist ;"
And in the search she might assist,
And no one guess.

We'll keep the secret a little more,
Then, as so many have before,
We'll seek the parson's friendly door,
And tell it there.

A MODEL SUNDAY-SCHOOL.

A SUNDAY-SCHOOL our special charge,
Wherein the little and the large,
Shall sweetest truths of gospel learn ;
Do greatest work, nor smallest spurn ;
But deem it ever grandest lot,
To gather in from hall and cot,
From way-side stroll, or nursery door,
The children of the rich and poor,
And teach them from the gospel word
The record of the blessed Lord,
Who came to earth, and took our dust,
And died to give us chance to trust.
No bashful boy without our door,

Shall weep that no one prizes more,
Nor asks to have a place within
The walls designed to fence out sin.

We welcome each, and welcome all,
And at the joy-inspiring call,
Of Sabbath bell, on Sabbath morn,
When brightest smiles his face adorn,
And at the eve, and through the week,
Each teacher will for learners seek,
And seek them gladly, grandly, too,
As angels highest errands do.

WHEN YOU AND I WERE BOYS.

WE count above our common good,
Selectest of our joys,

What people did in sunny times,
When you and I were boys.

'Mid lilacs and the clover bloom,
Our early moments ran ;
And happy in the songs of birds,
We journeyed up to man.

These scenes so blest to realize,
Are brighter, brighter far,
That memory doth with golden key
The gates of light unbar.

What other cure the world prescribes,

By far the safest, best,

Is glancing at our early days,

Is retrospect and rest.

From cares and crowds of urban life,

From traffic of the town ;

From wearing toil in dust and din,

From griefs that weigh you down ;

From present ill, and future dread,

And all that fetters thee,

Come to the country and the past,

Be innocent and free.

Review the scenes of early days,

With kind, religious care ;

The neighborhood once all your world,
And every object there.

The pansied yard, the slant well-sweep,
And apple orchard near;
The ancient farm-house, broad and red,
By many memories dear;

The hay-field and the pasture wide,
The fences by the lane;
The thick-leaved maples where you hid
When pattered down the rain;

The road where erst the stage-coach ran,
You studied as it passed;
That yellow coach with "thorough-brace,"
And built to have it last;

The level and the hilly road,
On which you trudged to school,
To "make your manners" and to learn
Hard Colburn's sum and rule ;

The school-house with its seats and stove,
And desks where jack-knives wrought,
And all the friendships that arose
'Twixt teacher and the taught ;

The ancient church and man of prayer,
And gracious words and looks ;
The lessons of the Sunday class,
And pleasant Sunday books—

These, and the thousand other scenes
Thine early being knew

Shall bring thee blessed light and balm,
And keep thee fresh and true.

By frequently reviewing them,
Thou shalt be young till death
Shall lift thee to the rarer bliss
Of everlasting breath.

THE YANKEE WESTWARD.

IN every western state they are,
True sons of Yankee land,
With earnest heart and buoyant hopes,
And ready, skillful hand ;

With native wit and lore of books,
Clear fire and common sense ;
With grit and patience to endure
And earnestness intense.

They go with lasting faith and pluck,
A freshness, and a trust,
They kept alive when erst they laid
The Briton in the dust ;

To fell the forest and to build
The railway and the mill ;
A pilgrim school in every glen,
A church on every hill ;

To fence and till in yeoman farms,
The prairie and ravine,
And build smart cities, in the wilds
Where Indian foot hath been.

They go to win a lasting name
For Yankees and the right,
And show to “redskin,” Dutch and Celt,
Their shrewdness and their might ;

To utilize the beautiful,
The useful beautify ;

The toiler's station, and his work,
With art to dignify.

They go to win achievements grand
In all the arts of peace,
And lead the van of progress, till
Time's course at last shall cease.

Fear not that in this boundlessness
The Yankee will be lost,
Though not the farthest western wild
But his sure foot hath crossed.

All that is sacred, fresh, or strong,
In Plymouth Rock and shore,
Transplanted in the widening West,
Shall live for evermore.

And so, Utopia realized,
Our land shall be adored,
Till all the kingdoms of the earth,
Are kingdoms of the Lord.

THE CRITICS.

THE wicked wish some critics have,
And knack, and greed, to kill
May pass quite readily for taste,
And evidence of skill ;

But were there none to write a rhyme,
Or paragraph of prose,
How critics then would pass their time,
Is more than mortal knows.

They might ascend the upper spheres
And criticise the stars,
And teach good manners and good sense
To Jupiter and Mars ;

Then clip away old Saturn's rings
And set him bounds to run ;
Or venture near the solar fires
To regulate the sun.

And should these critics go to Heaven,
Their joy would be to tell
How saints might tune their harps correct,
Or sing hosannas well !

CHICAGO'S TRIAL BY FIRE.

THE proudest city of the West
In desolation laid,
Chicago mourns her fortunes burned,
Like gossamer they fade.
The meager cot, the grand hotel,
The depot and exchange,
Are swept within the marching flame,
Whose onward maddening range

Devours a league of marble wealth,
And brings to naught the great,
At yester-eve who sat apart,
Ensconced in princely state ;

And, musing on their large success,
Planned larger wealth to gain ;
But learn so soon, how sadly true,
That human hopes are vain.

Men of all stations hurry forth
Rank now a thing unknown,
And 'scape, if so the flames permit,
The fiery, widening, zone,
Whose devastating sweep doth blot
The grandest works of men ;
As though the ancient Sodom scourge
Had rained on earth again.

Large pity for the desolate,
And reverence for God,

Are lessons of this ordeal
As spreads the news abroad.
Then pour your wealth and comforts in
To mend the losses made,
And ask the Lord to bid the fire,
“Let, here, thy waves be stayed.”

God's judgments are inscrutable,
But wisely all designed ;
Or fire, or flood, or pestilence,
Or devastating wind.
And grand the city shall arise
From ruins of to-day ;
And, in the future of the land,
Hold on its prosperous way.

Springfield, October 9, 1871.

“THE PAPER.”

BE it the ponderous city print,
Depicting urban ways,
With columns crowded with details
Of enterprise and frays ;
Or, less pretentious and disturbed,
The country weekly calm,
Delighting well the villagers
With sentences like balm ;

It hath important mission, fraught
With all that blesses earth,
And often maps the surest road
To usefulness and worth.

It hath the ward of interests
High, ever-during, great ;
Minute as little hamlets are,
And wide as is the state.

The writer at his paragraphs,
The printer working by ;
I pray their health and happiness
May never come to "pi;"
And that the sheet they print may live
For many years to come,
Prepaid, respected, and the light
Of rail-car, 'Change and home.

BE CHEERFUL EVER.

IT seems to me we might better our lot,

And lessen our ills by a half,

By thinking them simply the sort of jokes

To entertain with a laugh.

When Benjamin Beau, so rich and polite,

Weds the girl whose hand you had sought,

Then seek for another and better than she,

For still there are better uncaught.

When Jones of your village is chosen to Court,

And you remain out in the cold,

Then laugh and be glad to think you've escaped

The bickerings they have in the fold.

If, on fashionable streets, the bon ton
Salute you with "never a nod,"
Be happy at heart, a nobleman still,
Though doomed like a plebeian to plod.

When Fate rules adverse in everything,
Demolishing every plan ;
To laugh is difficult, then, I'll admit,
But glorious to laugh, if you can.
Toil on contentedly, then, in your sphere,
With sighing and scolding have done,
For troubles are still productive of good,
Albeit as curses they're known.

IN ALL LABOR THERE IS PROFIT.

THERE'S not a toiler on the earth
But gains a good reward,
The recognition of his worth,
In blessings from the Lord.

And only they whose idle hands
Disdain the honest toil,
In harvest sigh of barren lands,
And lack for corn and oil.

No matter what the work may be,
If it be honest work ;
To plow the land, or plow the sea,
Or Christianize the Turk.

But work with all thy might the day,

And work with trusting heart;

Cast useless doubts and fears away,

And act a manly part;

For comes there still a blessed time

When those who do and dare,

Shall gain the bright and better clime;

And there's no toiling there.

And not beyond this world alone

Accrue the joys to pay,

For burdens borne and labors done,

In this, our working day.

But here we have abundant good,

And choicest blessings given,

Of earthly peace a plenitude,
To indicate our heaven.

Art thou of high or plebeian birth,
Still sure is thy reward,
If thou hast labored on the earth
And trusted in the Lord.

The poor distinctions made by men
Are unessential there;
Our work and worth avail us then,
And not the names we bear.

AN ACKNOWLEDGMENT.

A CCEPT, selectest man I know,
Who met my sadder years,
And all unmindful of thy griefs,
Was mindful of my tears ;
Whose kindness, when but few were kind,
And noble gentleness,
Came so refreshingly to me,
And royally did bless ;

Accept the gratitude, too small,
My heart would offer thee,
For thine example and thine aid
So freely granted me ;

The heartiest words and kindest deeds
Wisely, but freely, given,
Imparting to my bitterest hours
A foretaste of my heaven.

Once scorned by those whom I had blest,
And doubted for my trust,
My pleasant plans were broken all;
My hopes were in the dust.
Then thou didst cheer me—blessed hour!
And sacred be the spot,
Till earth's ignoble men are both
Forgiven and forgot.

“SHE PLACED THE BITTER SWEET.”

TO girlhood's home returning,
She placed the bitter sweet

Within the grand old mansion,
Where sunbeams shadows meet;

And modest said, “Henceforward
Be kindness all my theme;
With constant hand dispensing,
The moments to redeem ;

And teach, if I have suffered,
I would the world be blest ;
And pray, if I have struggled,
The weary have good rest;”

Then thanked the Heavenly Father
Who kept her name so sweet,
That, through the bitter trials,
Her ways were all discreet.

The silver tresses mingling
Her raven locks among
Mean more than years, they index
Her heart's own sorrows wrung;

Of which most like she tells not,
So reticent of grief;
As most like she hath suffered
Too deeply for belief.

Beyond that first revealing
She speaks not of her lot;

Praying her many sorrows

By earth be all forgot.

To girlhood's home returning

She placed the bitter sweet,

Within the grand old mansion,

Where sunbeams shadows meet!

This home by Hope be guarded;

More sweet than bitter there;

There pleasant sunshine linger,

Dispelling clouds of care.

WILLIAMSBURG.

A TTEMPT the scene at Williamsburg,

And paint that fearful day

When friends, and families and towns

Were sudden swept away.

The eve before a peaceful sun

Smiled on the valley green ;

And happy sang Mill River, then,

Meandering through the scene !

In mansion, and in cottage, peace ;

At rest each busy mill ;

All deemed they had good lease of life,

And pleasant seasons, still.

And all was peace at break of morn ;

Men waked from happy dreams,

To hear the music of the birds,
And warbling of the streams !

Yon slight pent mountain lake 'gan burst,
To plunge the valley down !
A horseman rides in haste, to warn
The nearest 'dangered town !

Then Hillman brave takes up the cry,
And bravest Myron Day,
“ Ye people of the valley homes !
The flood ! Quick ! Haste away ! ”

Swift came the floods and blotted out
A hundred homes and more ;
And had not those swift couriers rode,
There were a hundred score.
But, heeding their prompt warnings given,
To hillsides haste the throng ;

Yet many stay to be engulfed
As sweeps the tide along !

The strong-built mills in atoms fall !

And on the swollen tide,
Large forest trees, houses and rocks
In mixed destruction ride.

And roars the torrent down the vale
To do still further death ;
And sweep still other towns away
With its devouring breath.

In one brief hour the work is done !

And then the saddest scene
That after wars, or wasting fires,
On earth hath ever been.

One wide destruction meets the eye ;
On every hand the dead ;

Strong, sun-browned men weep like the child,
And tremble with sore dread!

No time for words, no time for grief,
No time for funeral train;
But, mid the wrecks and debris piles,
All searching for the slain;
And all too sad to question why
Was this destruction made,
And ask on whom shall be the blame
Of this great ruin laid.

Mill River Valley desolate,
Its fields and homes laid waste,
Bears witness loud against the men
Who built their walls in haste.
As sad we gaze on Williamsburg,
And mourn the lack of skill,

That cost so many precious lives

And busy store and mill;

We'll vow eternal hate for fraud,

And eschew lies and shams;

Be honest in our daily lives,

Nor order fragile dams.

And if it be this sacrifice

Shall make the people wise,

To tone our weeping there might well

Some gratitude arise!

God bless the men who rode to tell

The coming of the flood;

And grant these heroes for their deeds

Abundant days and good.

May pleasant stars beam bright to bless

Whose hands kind dressed the dead,

And freely for the rescued ones
A prompt abundance spread.

Brave pastor* of the stricken church,
Serene 'mid peril's shock ;
Industrious searching through the plain
For loved ones of thy flock ;
Good teacher of the Sunday class,
Who beamed with grandest joy
To welcome from the waves alive *
The much-loved manly boy !

And faithful lover, who, that morn,
Left home in mountain street,
To seek a valley cottage trim
And his good sweetheart greet ;

*Rev. J. F. Gleason.

Met news that Leeds was swept away,
His dearest treasure gone,
But, choking quick his mighty grief,
Walked calm and rapid on;

Then eager searched for her remains,
Wept tears when she was found,
And silent stood to see her form
Laid in the burial ground;
And fenced the cottage site, to keep,
That none might ruthless tread,
Where dawnd his hopes, and where, at last,
His pleasant hopes were dead !

And aged man, who mourned the loss
Of silvered partner dear,
But mingled truest bravery
With every falling tear ;

And all who ready did their best
To mitigate the grief
Of mourning hearts, and build therein
Again, a bright belief

That God would overrule in love
This vast calamity,
And make those direst ills we know
Perpetual good to be—
'Tis ye I reckon, and your like,
Deserving hearty praise;
As bravest victors for the flag,
Deserve the nation's bays.

“FENCE UP THE WAY.”

RIGHT careful with his roadsters,
A traveler* down the way,
Was driving through the valley,
At close of wintry day;

When on the high bridge passing
It parted, thundering down;
Our traveler is sore wounded,
The waves the roadsters drown!

Far in the night discovered,
The men who roused him say,

*Mr. Edward Moseley, Westfield, Mass.

Thus spoke his care for others,
“Fence up the dangerous way!”

And, this precaution taken,
They bear him to an inn,
Where, with his dawning reason,
His questionings begin

About the steeds that pleased him,
And quick his voice would tell,
And swift, and strong, but gently,
Would course the plain so well.

Informed his pets were buried,
His tender heart burst forth,
“But they were my good darlings,
And more than gold their worth!”

And through the days succeeding
Friends watched his coming health,
And mourned the bridge that wrecked him
And spoiled his choicest wealth.

Heaven grant we heed the warning,
Our friends from wrong to stay;
That they be not sore tempted,
Fence up each dangerous way.

And may all towns remember
To make their bridges strong,
That there be no more perils
Like this we build in song.

A WORD OF CHEER.

TO A LADY, ON HER SEVENTY-SIXTH BIRTHDAY ANNIVERSARY.

GOOD woman, wise, that thou hast lived

To cheer thy friends so long,

Deserves full grander verse than this

Brief offering of song.

Thy days be pleasant till they close,

And when thy sun fades west,

Thine be an entrance through the gates,

To meet the good and blest!

THEY MEET AGAIN.

(SCENE IN BERKSHIRE COUNTY, MASS.)

“I’LL greet my old-time lover;
Come, brother, drive away,
I’ll greet my old-time lover,
On this delightful day!

“His home is ’mong these landscapes
Where we the season keep;
I know he’ll greet me grandly,
But will we joy or weep?

“Though sad and though unwedded,
I’ll be quite blithe to-day,
And greet my old-time lover;
Come, brother, drive away!

“Ours be a pleasant meeting;
Our words be true and plain;
And I’ll be wise and chary
To give his wife no pain.”

The roadsters knew their errand
And grandly sped along,
As sweep the waves of music
In a majestic song.

And at her brother’s asking
He neared the carriage side,
To greet his old-time sweetheart
Who had not been a bride.

With earnest words and wishes
That were not spoken loud,

And eyes a little tearful,
And spirits far from proud !

They asked each other's welfare,
And of old scenes and new ;
And spoke of friends still living,
And some beneath the yew ;

Then bade adieu so grandly
It was a scene to paint,
Unmarred by foolish sighing
Or plaint to match a plaint !

They wished each other blessing
Through all the coming days ;
And I, who sing, bespeak them
Abundant cause for praise !

“NAY, 'TIS NOT THUS.”

A FRIEND, well wed, and happy now
As when he took a husband's vow,
Gives noble sanction to my verse,
In asking that my pen rehearse
A message, daily growing dear,
Of olden love, and faith, and fear.
Would all who love were wise as he
Who speaks these tender thoughts to me,
And true mate won with him to dwell
By grandly saying, thus, farewell !
“ Good-bye dear girl; a kind good-bye ;
I can not tell the reason why
Thou canst refuse to bless my heart,
And hope and cheerfulness impart.

Why is it thus? why must it be?
That I no more may hope for thee.
Nay, 'tis not thus; God rules not so;
How adverse earth, what winds do blow,
Still, for each one, He rules o'er all,
Who sees the wounded sparrow fall
He sends as often joy as grief,
And for each woe vouchsafes relief;
Designs, and brings, each dreaded ill,
With sweetest joy our cup to fill.
In this dear, trying, school of love
Dissent, perchance, is meant to prove
How much I love thee, and how well;
So thou thy heart may wisely tell.
This being so, no more good-bye;
Love brings me faith that tells me why;
A blessed, high, perennial trust
In thee as true, and God as just.”

THE BRIGHTER DAYS.

A S, when the stormy day is o'er,
The sunset sheds its golden store;
And as appears his native shore
To sailor seeking home once more;
To soldier, at the campaign's close,
The long wished furlough of repose—
So, troubled one, shall be thy bliss,
For brighter days shall follow this.
So be thou brave and never faint;
Propitious gods thy prayers and plaint
Shall hear, and thee shall fully bless;
To serve thee, thy worst foes impress;
Thou shalt have joy instead of grief,

No shallow happiness nor brief;
Thy nights shall glow with silver gleams ;
Good angels visit thee in dreams ;
Thy morning break with brightest beams,
Along thy path sing happy streams.
And soon successful thou shalt stand,
Serene on Faith's safe table-land ;
On thee shall heavenly radiance shine
And grand, inspiring, hopes be thine !

“IF EVERY ONE OBSERVED.”

TO _____

GOOD friend, if every one observed

The mandate to be kind ;

If all were courteous as thyself,

And helpfully inclined ;

How bright a scene this earth would be,

How light life's burdens prove ;

How blithe along life's rugged road

Would pilgrims singing move !

Sweet resonance of sparkling streams

Would bless life's desert drear ;

And birds would sing, and flowers and fruit

With fragrance fill the air !

There is no overestimate
 Of kindness to our kind,
And brightest stars will bless the man
 To courteous ways inclined!

“AND NUMBERED FORTY-SIX.”

READ AT THE REUNION OF THE 46TH MASSACHUSETTS.

BRAVE comrades, good, assembled,

To talk about the past,

How very brief the decade

Since we had roll-call last !

How keen our recollection

Of those September days,

When, at the camp near Springfield,

We took on soldier ways !

The railroad ride to Boston,

And sailing down the bay,

In those dear, damp, old transports !

Five storm-rocked days to stay !

The voyage down to Morehead ;
The several Newbern camps ;
And all the dreary drilling,
And all the Trent road tramps !

The picket post at Newport ;
Our fears at Plymouth, when,
The rebels, with their ram built,
Would take the place again,
But suffered so from Foster,
At “little Washington,”
They trembled with great terror,
And from the region run !

The Kingston fight, and Whitehall,
The “Gum swamp” march and fight,

And all we did and suffered
In battling for the right,
Against the southern foemen,
In that rebellious land;
Till came a homeward order
For our militia band!

Although we were militia,
And served less than a year,
We gave the Johnny rebels,
Abundant cause for fear.
And, in the coming future,
No shame with pride will mix,
That we were Lincoln's soldiers,
And numbered Forty-six!

Now gone are camps and marches,
And gone the battle's noise;

A song to “caps” and “lieuties,”
The chaplain and “the boys;”
To our respected colonels,
And our brave major, grand,
And eke our brave, bright, adjutant,
And all who bore a hand!

To Bryant and his dozen,
Who held a thousand back!
When fierce along the Neuse road
They followed on our track!
And held the post so bravely,
The rebels feared brigades,
And hasted from that presence
When came the evening shades!

To all who did brave battle,
Or died in camp or plain!

And all at home who, bravely,
Endured bereavement's pain!—
The nation owes its honors,
And we give hearty thanks;
Then cheer our dear old banner,
And then be breaking ranks!

With hope the nation never
See such another strife;
Such drafts upon our treasure,
Such sacrifice of life.
But should the rebel Southrons
Repeat their treacherous tricks,
The boys to meet and thrash 'em
Are numbered Forty-six!

OUR YANKEE LAND.

GOD bless the good New England hills !
And every valley there ;

God bless the mountain lakes and brooks,
And their salubrious air.

And choicest blessings rest upon
The people of those States ;

God grant them pleasant skies above,
With plenty at their gates.

Prosperity attend their toil,
In factory and field ;

And may their skill with car and ship
Abundant profit yield.

May pestilence and famine spare

This most delightful spot;
And distant be the day when crime
Its history shall blot.

Although appeareth sectional,
To sing New England's praise,
I point the nation's history,
Through dark and prosperous days,
For proof that our New England leads
In national affairs,
And, with ability and grit,
The nation's burdens bears.

So, then, full fearlessly, with joy,
Whatever banner flaunt;
Do rebel Southrons greet with scorn,
Or Britons with a taunt;

We'll sing their name, whose head and heart,
And never-faltering hand,
Have well upheld the stars and stripes—
God bless our Yankee land !

Oh could I be forgiven, did
My heart not turn to thee,
With gratitude and pride, dear land,
For all thou art to me !

Thine atmosphere and scenery,
Thy present, future, past ;
Thy trials first, and glory now,
To last while time shall last ?

God bless the land where I was born,
And played, a happy child,
Ere yet I saw a Southern swamp,

Or roamed a Western wild ;
And where, within a cot among
Our Massachusetts hills,
My early being was attuned
By cadence of the rills.

And, in the future of my life,
Where'er my pathway lies ;
Whatever lot is meted out,
Or kind, or cold my skies ;
Still evermore, my song, at home,
Or on a foreign strand,
Through life, and at the honest hour—
God bless our Yankee land !

THINE.

TO W. F. C.

THINE be a pride in that grand state,
Where ruled thy kindred well ;
And where may all thy kith and kin
In peace and safety dwell.

Thine be ambition high to keep
Select thy father's name,
Within the town thy father built,
And where he built his fame ;

Wherein mayst thou have during peace,
Good gains, true friends and home ;

And where, for thee, if days be dark,
Be brighter days to come.

Thine be that most selectest bliss
Among the joys of earth,
The blessed consciousness they have,
Who honor toiling worth,

And find their words and timely deeds,
From darkness and duress,
Have cheered and lead deserving men
To sunlight and success !

Thine, then, shall be all earthly good ;
For thee will constant shine
Protecting stars, till death, and then
May heavenly joys be thine !

NOTE.

IT has been supposed by many that the “Smithville Worthies” described in “Rhymes of Yankee Land” were painted principally from residents of a village in the extreme western border of Hampden County, Massachusetts. But such is not the fact; though the originals of the “sinners” described lived there. The “brainless, brassy brag” pictured means a former merchant of the village, and a rich, tyrannical and self-righteous citizen of the place “sat” for the portrait of “Abijah Beers,” a combination of cruelty and meanness, above whose grave “thistles thrive.” “Crispin Crane,” whose ready wit earned him an election to the legislature, doubtless represents an old gentleman in a neighboring Berkshire town locally noted for his terse, bright sayings. The much-esteemed late George B. Morris, of Springfield, for years clerk of the courts for Hampden county, furnished the features in the picture of “the long-tried county clerk,” a central figure of the court group introduced in the narration of Crane’s experience as juror; and the magistrate, “polite and prompt,” presiding at that term, resembled Judge J. P. Put-

nam of the Massachusetts Superior Court. "The Yankee Westward" meant and means a worthy citizen and enterprising and successful business man, well known at the West, Hon. Francis E. Warren, of Cheyenne, a native of Hinsdale, in the same mountainous section of Massachusetts that produced Henry L. Dawes, Edwin D. Morgan, Gen. James C. Rice, William Cullen Bryant, and other great and successful Americans. "A tribute" is paid to an elderly lady still residing at Springfield, a pattern of wisdom and godliness; and a grateful "acknowledgment" is made to a distinguished gentleman formerly of Springfield, for timely and wise words of counsel and encouragement.

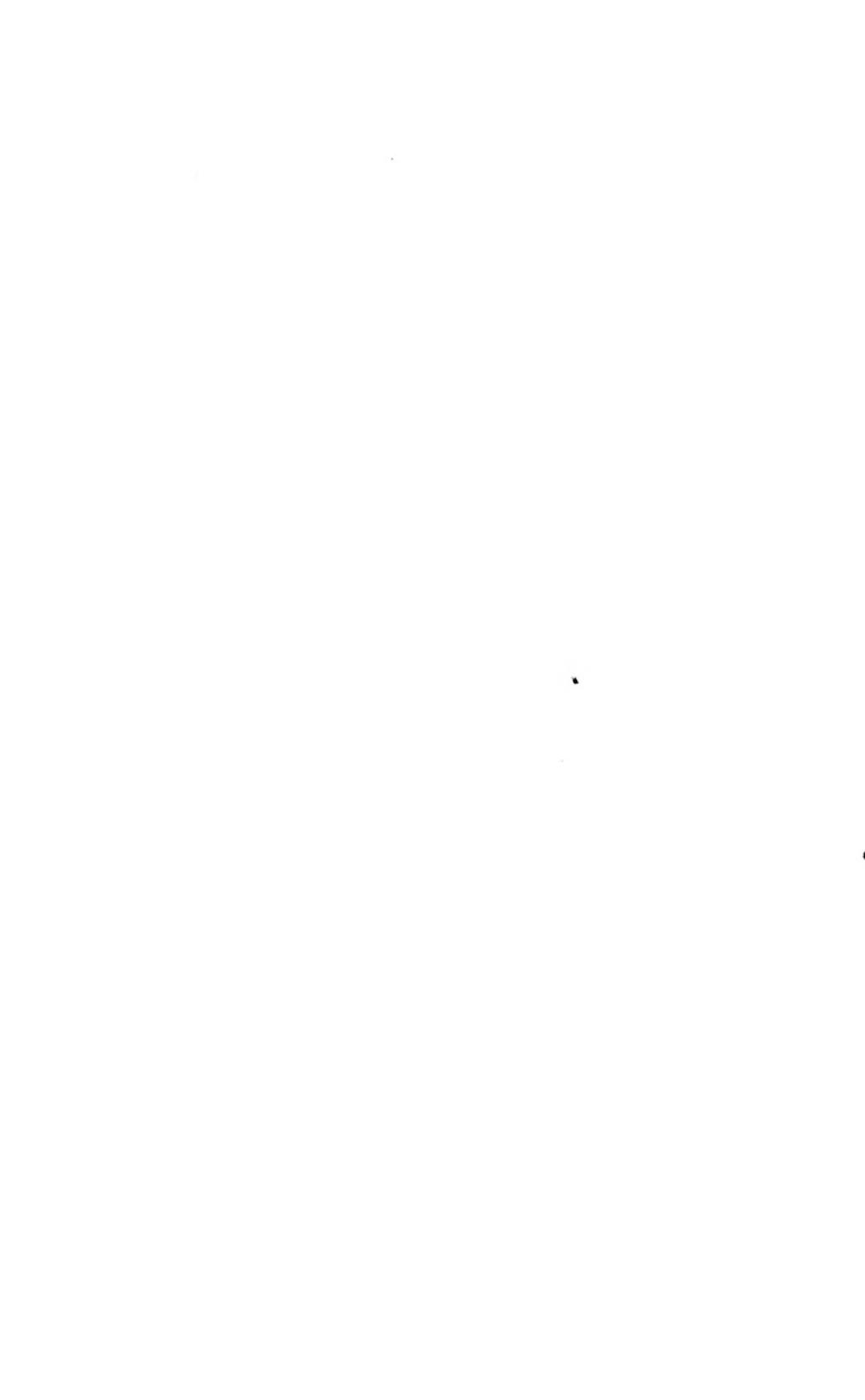
In writing the poems added in the present edition, the author doubtless had in mind still other persons and places in Western Massachusetts. Some of the touching scenes of the Mill River flood have brief mention in the poem, "Williamsburg," and "Fence up the Way," was suggested by the self forgetfulness and noble care for others manifested by Mr. Edward Moseley, of Westfield, when found severely injured in the ruins of a fallen bridge at Hatfield, in March, 1874. The mother of this unselfish man is the lady to whom the word of cheer was addressed on her seventy-sixth birthday anniversary. A returned Berkshire captain is the "old-time lover" eulogized for his manliness.

Silence is appropriate in reference to the name and the residence

of the noble woman who, after great trials, returned to the "grand old mansion" of her youth, "placed the bitter sweet" as emblem of her sufferings and the good she proposed to do for others, and "reticent of grief," made no mention of her troubles "beyond a first revealing." The original of the picture might have been a woman of talent and excellence, toiling in a paper mill at Holyoke to earn support denied by a gambling husband; or an elderly lady driven by an unfilial son and his wife from a much-loved and well-earned home at Suffield, Conn.; or a brave, good woman returning to her girlhood's home in Hampshire county from a search for a long-absent husband, to whose house, at the South, she was refused admittance by a new wife of her own faithless lord! But let the name and the home of the real heroine of the poem be unpronounced in an inquisitive and inconsiderate world!

The poem "And Numbered Forty-Six," was read at the first reunion of the Forty-Sixth Massachusetts, a regiment that served with credit in defense of the nation against the "rebel southrons." Of this battalion, William S. Shurtleff, of Springfield, Mass., and L. B. Walkley, of Westfield, were the colonels; Samuel B. Spooner, of Springfield, was major, and James G. Smith, of Holyoke, adjutant. The brave man who, with a dozen comrades, "held a thousand back," is Mr. A. S. Bryant of Springfield and the Boston and Albany Railroad, who was a member of Company A with the rank of sergeant,

and at the time mentioned was detailed on picket on the Neuse Road, at a bridge one mile out from the outpost at "Batcheller's Creek, N. C." At Batcheller's the Company were stationed, Captain Lewis A. Tifft commanding. The rebels on their march, by that route, to recapture Newbern, came, one afternoon, upon Bryant, with ten times his numbers. He bravely repelled their fierce attack and held the bridge. Company A subsequently came up; and the whole band, numbering not over fifty, remained all night on their arms. The enemy supposed that behind this handful of soldiers was massed the whole Union army, and at night retreated and relinquished their attempt to take the city. In recognition of his bravery at the bridge, a medal of honor was awarded by "The Congress to Sergeant A. S. Bryant."



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